

This chuckling, so far as I can tell, invariably follows this particular tune, but none other. Other Orioles in the same locality sing other tunes with a more mellow and variable quality of whistle; but these latter birds, so far as I can be sure of their individual identity, never chuckle at any time. The chuckling birds seem also to be of a duller orange, almost the tint of a Bluebird's breast, or a 'chestnut' horse, and are possibly last year's young or two-year-olds.

This chuckling song seems well worth mention, because as it is so marked and unusual it can be readily detected. And it would be interesting to inquire how widely spread this song may have become this season, as well as whether it has ever been heard before. If the song is a mimicry or imitation of some other species, I should welcome any suggestion as to the identity of its original model. — REGINALD C. ROBBINS, *Boston, Mass.*

*Song of the White-crowned Sparrow (Zonotrichia leucophrys).* — A recent study of captive White-crowned Sparrows tends to show that the female sings a simple copy of the male's usually exquisite strain. Of four females that have come under my notice since the fall of 1897, three have sung in the manner described, while the exceptional one was a bungler that never wholly succeeded in getting the song just right. This bird, captured October 7, 1897, and released July 26, 1898, was in song from October 20 to December 10, 1897, and again during March, April, May and June of the following year.

Early in October, 1898, when White-crowns were perhaps a hundred strong in a nearby weedy potato field, I secured five specimens, two adults and three immatures. One of the adults, recognized as a female, was presently set free; the other, a doubtful subject, on being referred to a tame male of 1897, was immediately identified by him as one of the opposite sex. She was quiet and orderly, — uncommonly so, — hence was reserved for future study.

Of the young trio one turned out to be a female, and although very wild at first, eventually, without coaxing, became tame and confiding. In the fall of 1898 she sang but little and only on occasions when 'fighting mad.' Both females sang intermittently in March and April and daily during May, 1899.

The young males sang diligently from the middle of October to the second week of July, when moulting set in. In March the juvenile style of singing gradually gave way to the adult form. But from the commencement, when angry and defiant, these youngsters always sang in the manner of the adult bird. This strain is not limited to five or six notes, but ranges, according to my observations, from four to fourteen, not including a twittered prelude which oftentimes introduces the song proper.

At first my captives were confined in cages, but latterly have had the freedom of a room where they can fly about and bathe at pleasure. A

soap box partly filled with sweepings from the hayloft affords them plenty of leg exercise, but unfortunately is also the cause of many a self-fish quarrel. In order that my birds keep in good health, I have always studied to vary their fare. Besides canary and millet seed, they receive ants' eggs, Mockingbird food, berries, meal worms, etc. If no other live food is offered, they will even accept small earthworms. In winter the little fat grubs and 'worms' found in goldenrod galls are a welcome treat. — E. D. DOWNER, *Utica, N. Y.*

*Ammodramus henslowii*. — A Correction. — In 'The Auk' for April, 1889, p. 194, I reported the occurrence at Fort Adams, Newport, R. I., of *Ammodramus henslowii*. My identification was afterwards found to be incorrect, but through oversight the record has not been changed until now. — WIRT ROBINSON.

Leconte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*) in Kentucky. — A specimen was killed April 15, 1899, in an old weed-grown clover field, about two miles east of Lexington, Ky. It was quite tame, allowing us to approach within five or six feet before attempting to escape. A second specimen was seen July 16, while feeding near the foot of an old 'rock fence' in a dirt lane, the sides of which were overgrown with catnip, wild sage, and various other weeds and young trees.

I believe the species is a rare summer resident and breeder.

This is, as far as I am aware, the first record of its occurrence in Kentucky. — OTTO HOLSTEIN, *Muir, Ky.*

Nesting of Nelson's Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni*) in North Dakota. — June 14, 1899, on a broad, alkaline flat, lately a shallow arm of Devils Lake, now nearly dried up, among scant, short grass in a wet, oozy spot, I found the nest of this little known Sparrow, securing the sitting bird and mate with the eggs. An overflow of surface water from a marsh just beyond, during the spring, flows over this flat, at first through a sort of natural ditch, then gradually spreading out till it loses itself in the sticky soil. A bit of ground about three feet square, raised an inch or two from the general level, was sufficient to cause this trifling flow of inch-deep water to divide, forming a tiny island, which was not exactly dry but more nearly so than the immediate surroundings. Here, sunk in the wet earth, and lined sparingly about the sides, but very thickly in the bottom, with fine dried grasses of a wiry nature was the nest, containing five eggs raised by the thick lining well up out of the wet. As the general situation when observed by me was rather dryer than when the nest was first built it must be that the selection of a dismally wet spot was deliberate and, perhaps, indicates the regular custom.

The finding of the nest was purely accidental as, in a more or less vain effort to keep my feet dry, I sprang from point to point, finally alighting with both feet squarely astride the nest, and the sitting bird, as she flut-